

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 304.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1869.

PRICE 1½d.

WAS SHE WORTH IT?

CHAPTER I.—THE ASSEMBLY-ROOMS OF BARNCOTE
IN 1847.

THE Upper Ten Thousand of Barncote are gathered together at one of their monthly assemblies. It is the 31st of December, and in consequence, the ball is a more brilliant and 'dressy' affair than usual. As a rule, the Barncotians, in those days, set their faces against any sumptuary extravagance, and the monthly assemblies usually entailed on Paterfamilias only the expense of a few yards of ribbon and a bit of white muslin.

This is an exceptional occasion: the officers from the barracks are present *en masse*, and, by special request, in uniform; the band of the 4th Bays is also in attendance, and relieves the cornet-à-piston and three fiddles with a strident gallop or rattling polka. The female Barncotians were arrayed in great splendour, and in all the bravery of diaphanous muslins, shimmering satins, and other millinery properties. The black coats present were rather at a discount; not that the young ladies were not fully aware of the temporary character of a flirtation with the 'Bays,' and the much higher chances of a satisfactory settlement with the young native lawyers, brewers, maltsters; but that, round dances not having been long in vogue in the county, the natives, as a rule, could not or would not dance them; so that when the brass band struck up a lively polka, there was a general move on the part of the civilians to the card-rooms adjoining for a little loo.

There were two card-rooms, one leading out of the other. In the first were a couple of whist-tables. At one of these sat Colonel Poyser of the Bays, a gray-haired old soldier; Callum, the Barncote brewer; Mrs Poyser, the colonel's wife, a clever meek old lady, whose silver hair was done up in rolls on the top of her head; and Lady Whittaker, the relict of a city grandee. Leaning over her father's shoulder, her curls getting in the old man's way as he sorted his cards, and causing him to puff and snort, and wave his hands impatiently

in the air, stood Lucy Callum, as fair a vision as ever maddened the heart of a susceptible Barncotian. Sweet Lucy Callum, pen and ink can't picture thy charms, dear fair Saxon maiden! That her hair was nut-brown—not shot with gold or tinged with red, but of the extinct good old-fashioned russet brown; that her skin was as fair and pure as the white lip of a sea-shell, tinged with the hue of youth and health, and her rosy lips just parted, shewed the dearest little teeth in the world; that her eyes were of a deep lucid gray, fringed with long lashes a shade darker than her hair: to tell you all this is only waste of time; you would fail to realise the sweetness of Lucy Callum. And yet I wish I could paint her for you. She is of a type of womanhood now extinct, of a simpler, easier world, of a more quiet and faithful time. —*Forty-seven*, ah me, since then, the world has changed from an old respectable, staid, and proper world, to a raddled old harriidan dancing the Cancan!

There stood by the vicar's wife at the second card-table, pretending to look over her cards, but in reality drawing long draughts of love from the contemplation of Lucy Callum, a young and handsome fellow of some twenty years of age. This was Tom Bellamy, a distant relative and ward of John Callum the brewer.

The entrance of the young men from the ball-room disturbed the whist-players, and the game was suspended for a moment, as they passed through into the inner room.

Colonel Poyser looked anxiously from under his bushy eyebrows, but none of his youngsters were of the party; only Captain Prodder and Major Bond, who could take care of themselves. The Bays was a quiet, gentlemanly regiment, and old Poyser was like a father to his youngsters, and kept them away as far as he could from the temptations of unlimited loo. Whist the old man encouraged, and didn't mind what the points were, but 'those gambling games' he set his face against most sternly.

Tom Bellamy made a move as though to pass between the red curtains into the inner room.

Callum looked up over his gold eye-glasses: 'No loo to-night, Tom.'

'Well, I'll just take a hand, uncle,' said Tom carelessly.

Old Callum was wonderfully fond of a little quiet gambling himself, and report said that at the private card-club at the *White Hart* a thousand or two would sometimes change hands on a single night; report said also that the change had frequently been unfavourable to Mr Callum. His nephew therefore felt as though Satan were reproving sin, when his uncle (titular: he was only a distant cousin really) admonished him for losing twenty pounds or so at loo.

But Lucy left her father's side, and took Tom by the arm: 'Dance this polka with me, Tom. I've refused half-a-dozen, to keep a dance for you, and then you've never asked me once.'

'Well, you know,' said Tom, 'I ain't much good at the polka; and as for asking you, there's been no getting near you all the evening, for these soldier fellows.'

You see Tom, though tremendously in love, was but a young cub. A long-legged young cornet here entered, and carried off Miss Callum. Tom had missed his chance, and was as sulky as a bear. He walked into the next room. Some sweet little cherub, however, sitting up aloft, had determined that Tom should not drop his money that night. Young Winter, a cool and cautious hand, who never continued playing when the cards were against him, and who, having been twice loosed for five pounds, had resigned his seat, on the pretence of going to find a partner for the Lancers—young Winter caught hold of Tom by the arm: 'Come with me, Tom; I have something to say to you of importance.'

Archibald Winter was a few years older than his friend. He was now a junior partner in the firm of Winter, Boothby, and Winter, Solicitors, of Pump Street. His female friends called him ugly. He was short and thick-set; his dark hair hung down to the velvet collar of his coat: a projecting forehead and heavy brows shadowed a pair of keen and piercing eyes. He was not prepossessing, but powerful-looking. Not popular with the youth of Barnet, he was reputed 'near,' and a keen hand; but he didn't consort much with young men, and the only friend he had was Tom Bellamy.

'I want to have a long talk with you, Tommy; and we'll go across to the billiard-room, and have a smoke: there'll be nobody there to-night, and the marker's got a holiday, so we'll have a quiet chat all to ourselves.'

Tom walked out rather unwillingly; he didn't like leaving the game in the hands of the long-legged cornet, although he didn't know how to play his cards when he had them.

The billiard-room was a subscription affair. It was on the ground-floor of a house, the upper rooms of which were occupied for offices. A deaf old woman lived in the basement, and looked after the rooms. Winter closed the outside door, and bolted the latch. There was a good fire burning in the room; he turned up the gas, and pulled off the linen cover of the table: 'Tom, I'll play you a level fifty, and take eight to five in half-crowns.'

You see Archibald was a canny youth, and liked to be paid for his time even when counselling a friend.

'I can't do it, Archie; but I suppose I must try.'

Winter gave a miss in balk, and Tom twisted in off the spot, brought the red over the middle pocket, scored up to forty, and muffed a cannon a baby couldn't have missed. Tom made a face, and looked at the end of his cue.

'It isn't chalk that's wanting, it's caution,' said Winter, proceeding to make half-a-dozen easy little cannons; and then holding the red, and finding his opponent under the cushion, he gave another safe miss; and Tom failing to get in again, he won the game in a succession of easy breaks.

'Trouble you for a sov., Tommy. And now, let's sit down, and have a chat and a pipe. Tommy, you'll be of age in a week.'

'Did you bring me here to tell me that?' said Tom sulkily. The loss of his loo, of his Lucy, and of his sovereign, had rather soured the youth's temper.

'Now, Tom, I want to know what you're going to do?'

'As to what?'

'As to making a start in the world.'

'Well, that's pretty well decided for me. I'm to go into my uncle's business.'

'What! brewing?'

'Yes.'

'Then why did your uncle incur the expense of making you a scientific farmer?'

'Five years ago, when I went to old Scramble to learn farming, my uncle didn't intend to make me a brewer.'

'Oh! two years ago, then, when you went to Barber, to learn surveying and agency-work?'

'Two years ago, my uncle told me he couldn't take me into his business.'

'Ah! Then how is it the old chap has changed his mind?'

'He told me this morning. He has had such good accounts of me, that he thinks he shall be safe in taking me into the business.'

Winter grinned. He got up and opened the door, looked out into the passage, closed the door carefully, sat down, and whispered: 'Do you believe him?'

'Why shouldn't I?'

'Look here, Tommy. Five years ago, your uncle was a rich man, and the brewery bringing him a fortune. Two years ago, the brewery was flourishing, and your uncle firm on his legs. Now—listen, Tommy—he isn't worth a penny!'

Tom jumped on to his feet as white as a sheet: 'Nonsense, Archie.'

'I know it, Tommy. He's lost five thousand each year for the last two years on the hop-duty.* He's been buying up hops for a rise for the last two years, and they've been going down ever since. He's lost fifty thou. at least by that; and he's been going on awful at loo too. I tell you, Tom, and I know it, he can't hold out another six months. It is Birkin's bank that keeps him up: he owes them so much, they're afraid to stop him. Where's your five thousand, Tommy?'

'In consols, I know: he told me so.'

'He told you so,' said Winter scornfully. 'Look here; unless you act at once, that'll go too, if it hasn't gone already.'

* In 1847, there was a duty on hops, and large sums were wagered on the probable amount.

'That can't be, Winter. Birkin the banker is the other trustee, and the stock couldn't be sold without his sanction.'

'Well, you're so far right. If you insist on having the stock transferred to you when you come of age, they'll find either the stock or the cash. But Tommy, boy, keep it out of your uncle's clutches, or you'll lose it all, stock, lock, and barrel.—Now, look here, old fellow; Lord Theynam was at our office to-day.'

'Well, what of that?'

'He came to ask the governor—you know we are his local solicitors—if he knew of a clever young fellow to take his agency here. He's going to pension off old Birks. The salary ain't much—one hundred and fifty pounds a year—but it's fair to start with. His head man, you know, gets twelve hundred pounds a year. The governor called me in; and I mentioned your name, and his lordship knew it at once; said your father had been of great service to him; and, in fact, he'd have sent for you then and there, but I told him you weren't in the town; and he's coming in again on Saturday.'

'I don't care much about lords,' said Tom ungraciously, 'and I'd rather not be a flunky.'

'Dash it, man! the money don't smell. Tommy, my dear old boy, here are two roads in life: one leads to a competency and a sure and respectable position in life; the other, to bankruptcy, ruin, death! Tell me now, before you go, you'll ask Lord Theynam for this agency?'

Tom took up a cue and began knocking the balls about. Just at the moment, the band in the assembly-rooms struck up. The band and the dancers had come in refreshed from supper. It was a jovious gallop, and the quick beat of eager feet shook the room in which they stood.

Tom caught the impulse of the moment. 'Come along, Archie; let's look up some partners. I'll see you about business in the morning.'

Winter followed with a grunt of dissatisfaction.

Pretty Lucy was very angry with Tom for playing truant, and would hardly speak to him till the party broke up. It was a lovely night, the full moon throwing a golden band of light over the rippling waves; each tiny ripple, as it sped on to the shore, carried the glory with it, and shattered it on the shingle. The beat of the waves seemed to make a harmony with the beat of two human hearts. Anyhow, before they reached No. 1 Montgolfier Terrace, Tommy and Lucy had made it up.

CHAPTER II.—NO. 1 MONTGOLFIER TERRACE IN 1847.

Tom Bellamy found his way to his uncle's house as soon as he decently could, on the morning after the ball. He wanted to assure himself that the episode of the night before wasn't only a delightful dream. When Lucy Callum appeared in a pink morning wrapper, looking pale and sorrowful, his heart gave a mighty throb as he thought: 'She has changed her mind!' But Lucy set his fears at rest, nestling in his arms for a moment, and allowing him to take two or three little kisses. But she looked up into his face with such wistful eyes: 'O Tom, poor papa is so ill!'

'Why, what's the matter? He looked so well last night.'

'Yes; but he was taken ill this morning: the doctor says it's paralysis; he has been insensible for a long time, and Dr James says—O poor papa!' And here Miss Lucy broke down, and sobbed her heart out against Tom's waistcoat.

Tom didn't know exactly how to comfort her. He was fond of his uncle, and shocked at the idea of his death; but he couldn't hit on anything likely to console his sweetheart. 'These trials, you know,' he began—'it's all for the best, dear: there's a brighter world.' And then it struck him that a world without short whist, unlimited loo, old port, and brandy and water, however bright it might be, wouldn't suit the old gentleman; and so he took to kissing the poor damp salt cheeks that were turned up to him for sympathy; and by-and-by the great soft-hearted boy began to blubber too; and that seemed to do her good, for she stopped crying, and began to comfort Tom, stroking his hair off his forehead, and calling him all sorts of pet names; and then, when Tom had mopped himself up, and was thinking what a great booby he was, she ran away to look after her papa.

After a while she came back. 'He's sensible now, and asking for you.' Tom crept up-stairs, and stood by his uncle's bedside. The old man had the mark of death on him. 'Tom,' he whispered in a hoarse voice that seemed to come from a long way off—'Tom, look after Lucy, and stick to the business, for better or worse.'

'By God's assistance, I will!'

You see Tom's feelings had been wrought up a good deal; especially seeing that he was thinking more of Lucy than the business, which the old man had coupled with her.

The dying man took Tom's hand and pressed it: it wasn't the sort of hand-clasp that a father would give who has just bestowed a beautiful daughter and a large fortune on a suitor, but an appealing, clinging, deprecating squeeze; at least so Tom felt it; and perhaps he was right.

Well, John Callum died and was buried; and after the funeral came the reading of the will. It happened also that the day of the funeral was Tom Bellamy's birthday. The will was dated a week before the old man's death. It was short and to the purpose. He bequeathed everything of which he died possessed, after paying his just debts and funeral expenses, to his daughter; and appointed Thomas Bellamy sole trustee and executor. It was his wish, he had added to his will, that his daughter should marry his ward and kinsman, if, as he believed, there was a mutual attachment between them; but in any case he was satisfied to intrust his daughter's welfare to Thomas Bellamy. There were present at the reading of the will, Winter, father and son (the former officiating); Mrs Drux, Callum's widowed sister; old Birkin, the banker; Lucy and Tom. As nobody except the two lovers had any expectations from the will, there was a general grunt of approval. Winter, having folded up the will, looked round on the company, and said: 'I believe I, ahem, violate no, ahem, secrets, when I inform you that there is, ahem, every prospect that our esteemed and, ahem, departed friend's wishes will be fulfilled. On this, ahem, sad and, ahem, trying occasion, it is perhaps not, ahem, seemly to enter into, ahem, congratulatory matter, but we all wish 'em well, and God bless 'em.'

Lucy came over to Tom's side, and put her hand

into his. It was a pretty little hand; and Tom, who didn't know exactly what to do with it, had almost made up his mind to have another cry—he was a soft-hearted fellow, and his heart was very full—when he caught sight of Archibald Winter's face in the pier-glass. It was so wild-looking and livid, that he hardly recognised it as his friend's. He turned quickly round; but Archie had recovered himself, although he was still white in the face. This little incident quite put Tom into spirits. His love-affair had been almost too quietly and quickly arranged; but to find that there was a jealous rival in the field, and that rival his best friend, why, it was quite thrilling; and now, too, he remembered the conversation of the other night. 'So that was your little game, Master Archie, was it, to put me off the scent, eh?' said Tom to himself; and he began to fancy that he should find his uncle's affairs in better order than that sly fox had led him to expect. I don't think he was a bit angry with his friend, but rather flattered and proud at the tribute paid to the value of the prize he had secured so easily.

The guests went out; the banker taking young Tom by the hand, whispered: 'Call at the bank to-morrow, Tom, about eleven.'

Tom and Lucy and Mrs Drux sat over the fire to talk about the future. Tom, you see, was master of the house now, and of all within it, of the big brewery in Albany Street, of the drays, and wagons, and horses, and men, and all things thereunto pertaining; and he was a little bit set up by his importance.

Mrs Drux was a comely old dame, portly and dignified. She would tell you that she came of the first families of Wessex, and so indeed she did; although her forbears were but bankers and brewers and farmers, and such-like. For the men of Wessex have not faded (or had not then faded) in the shadows of great houses. The land was held not by great territorial lords, but by yeomen and squires. Lords there were, and big houses and great parks; but their big houses were but county villas, in the estimation of the Wessex men. They did not dominate the county, and shut out the sunlight from the plain county-folk. These Wessex people were narrow and exclusive too in their society. Trade did not disqualify; but it must be carried on by a Callum, a Poyser, a Birkin, or a Sponge. Their cliques and coteries, their circles and assemblies, are all dead and withered up; their people have worshipped strange idols, and bowed the knee to Baal.

'Now, my dears,' said Mrs Drux, beaming amiably on the two sweethearts, 'I'm an old woman, and can speak my mind, and there's no use in shilly-shallying. I know it was poor dear John's wish that you should be married at once, and I don't see why not. The business wants looking after, and Tom can manage it much better as owner and master, than as executor to his poor uncle. Here's the house all ready for you, and wanting a master; and I daresay you won't turn your old aunt out of doors just yet. You know, Tom, dear, that I've got ten thousand pounds of my own, which John invested in the business, and gave me five per cent. for; and I paid him two hundred and fifty pounds a year for my keep, and so on; and we can go on in the same way for a while, till you find the old woman a nuisance. So, Tom and Lucy, I say this day month for the wedding-day.

No fuss, but just slip out and get married; and then take a week at Boolong or the Isle of Wight, and come home to business again.'

Lucy knelt down by her aunt, and hid her face amongst her voluminous skirts. 'O aunt,' she whispered, 'it can't be so soon.'

'Dear heart alive, and why not? La! your poor dear papa, that's in heaven now, will be rejoiced at it; but there—I shall leave you and Tom to talk it over.'

And so they settled it.

Tom's interview with the banker was protracted. Archie Winter had been right so far—the bank had made heavy advances to his uncle. But the old banker spoke so quietly and kindly, shewed such confidence in Tom's prospects, so flattered his self-love, that Tom found that, almost before he knew it, he had undertaken to take over the business, with its liabilities, on his approaching marriage—a step which the old banker cordially and warmly approved. He was a kindly old soul, poor Birkin, and honestly desirous to do the best for everybody, consistently with the interests of the 'bank.'

'And now, my boy, about this little fund of yours—the five thousand pounds, you'll bring that into the business, of course?' Why, yes, of course, Tom would. 'Well, brewing does pay better than consols, eh, Tom? You must sign a power of attorney before you leave, and we'll sell them out for you.'

It wasn't till Tom had got to his own lodgings, and was smoking a pipe, that the thought struck him: 'Where's Mother Drux's ten thousand pounds? Ah! it's in the business somewhere; and my five thousand pounds is going to join it.'

He started off to the brewery, to look over the books; but he couldn't make head or tail of them. Panks, the book-keeper, had been keeping the books for the last thirty years on the same principle, and he couldn't make head or tail of them. Tom made up his mind to have an alteration here, and walked off to see his lawyer, after signing a few cheques from a brand-new cheque-book, which Tom took a little pride in. It was something to have a banking-account in those days. Now, every man who has cash or credit to the tune of twenty pounds, may have his account, and draw his cheques just like a millionaire.

Winter senior was at the office, and glad to see his young client. Tom explained his wants, and his dissatisfaction with the state of the brewery books. 'If you'll take my advice, Tom, I wouldn't make any change at present; keep things going for a time, till you feel qualified to take the management yourself.'

'Oh, as for the books,' said Tom, 'I'll square them up soon enough. I'm not going to have a lot of idle fellows eating up the business. There's Panks the book-keeper, and two clerks, and two travellers, and a collector, and a boy, and an old man to take care of the office, and an old woman to take care of the old man. I'll do the whole lot myself, and make a clearance of the crew.'

'Gently, Tom, gently; these things mustn't be done in a hurry. Leave things alone, and learn the business, Tom.'

'Well, that's just what's troubling me,' said Tom: 'I know nothing of brewing.'

'You don't want to, Tom; you don't want to. What's required is management, Tom,

management, and keeping the connection together. Your name stands high here, Tom: all the magistrates know you, and knew your father before you. We'll have you on the borough bench, Tom, the next batch that's made.'

'Thankee,' said Tom; 'but still, don't you think if I'm to brew good beer, I ought to know something about the way?'

'Listen, Tom. It isn't by brewing good beer you'll keep up the business. You don't suppose anybody will drink your beer who has the choice of Bass or Allsopp, do you? Management, Tom; management—that's everything! To buy up all the little public-houses, and advance money to the big ones; to open new houses, and get licenses for your own men, and keep Humby's people out. Then you'll have to sweeten the police; that you'll have to do through your subs; and the worst of that is, that it's wasteful, such a lot of money sticks in the way. Then there's a good deal of trouble in getting hold of public-houses. Why, I know lots of houses your poor uncle has taken on lease for thirty, forty, and sixty pounds a year, and lets again at ten, or fifteen, or twenty pounds.'

'I wonder,' thought Tom, 'if Mrs Drux's ten thousand pounds is invested in that sort of property?'—'That don't seem a profitable way of investing money—does it, sir?' he said aloud.

'Profitable, bless me! all that comes out of the beer.'

'And out of the pockets of the clodhoppers who drink our beer, sir.'

Winter looked up sharply—he didn't approve of that way of handling topics. 'Well, Tom, I'm rather busy just now; but let me advise you at once to call on all the gentry of the county, and solicit their patronage. You won't get anything out of it at first; but they'll like it, and it'll be remembered at licensing-time; and don't go in a stuck-up sort of way, but just as a tradesman, and have a big card printed "Mr Thomas Bellamy, Common Brewer, solicits the favour of the continuance of the gracious patronage accorded to his deceased uncle." There—something of that sort. And, Tom, put on a black dress-coat; it looks humble and unassuming, and they *do* like it so. And you must be friendly with the butlers, Tom, and tip them well; they've often saved money, and are looking out for public-houses. They won't drink your beer, Tom; but for harvest-homes and tenants' dinners, and that sort of thing, Tom, you may get some good orders from them.'

'I'm dashed if I think I shall like the business: there seems to be a great deal of flunkysm in this brewing.'

'Silly boy, silly boy! you'll never get on without it—Well, good-bye, Tom. Wedding-day fixed, eh? Wish you joy—wish you joy.'

The wedding-day was fixed, and the wedding came off at the appointed time. Mr Birkin gave the bride away, and joined the family over the cold fowl and bottle of sherry which did duty for a wedding-breakfast. Whilst the bride was changing her coloured dress for a black travelling one, old Birkin drew Tom into the little breakfast-parlour.

'Tom, I'll get you to write your name across these bills; they represent the amount of our advances to your firm. We shall renew them, of course, from time to time, and we shall only

charge you for the stamps and the ordinary current interest.'

'Now, suppose,' said Tom, 'just for the sake of argument, that I *won't* accept these bills.'

'Well, in that case,' said Birkin, 'we should have to realise our collateral securities.'

'And what does that mean?'

'Selling the brew-house, and this house and the furniture, and the public-houses, and disposing of the business to the best advantage; or perhaps we might carry it on ourselves.'

'Well, that's candid,' said Tom. 'Perhaps I'd better sign! It was only my joke, you know, Mr Birkin.'

Mr Birkin smiled grimly. 'Ah, Tom, you must get out of the way of joking in business.'

After that, Tom's faculties became confused, for Mrs Tom made her appearance, and they drove off to the station. Happy Tom!

CHAPTER III.—No. 1 MONTGOLFIER TERRACE IN 1857.

Ten years have made many alterations in Barn-cote. It is the close of a November day—the sun is going down into the sea in a gold and purple haze. The esplanade is crowded; fair girls are dashing past on horseback; carriages are rolling by; and yet with all there is a hush and a calm, that may be felt. You hear the ringing laughter of light-hearted girls, the beat of the horses' hoofs, the jingling of the harness, and the rattle of the wheels; but between all you can catch the measured plash of the waves, the thud of the oars in the rowlocks of the boat in which the fisherman stands throwing out his nets, and the hail of his comrade on shore.

Ten years have prospered well with Barn-cote. In '47, only a provincial bathing-town; in '57, a 'queen amongst watering-places.'

Montgolfier Terrace has shared in the general advance. No. 3, where Mr Hanks lived, is now occupied by the Countess Bigaroon, family, and suite. Admiral Bobbin, the sea-lord, lives in No. 4. By-and-by, when the daylight is altogether gone, and the tattoo is sounded at the barracks, and the picket is tramping along, turning our gallant defenders out of the public-houses, where they have been stupefying themselves with Bellamy & Co.'s Entire, if you stroll up Montgolfier Terrace, you will see through the windows on the ground floor, wide open, although in November, men and women in evening dress, and dinner-tables loaded with crystal and flowers and sparkling lights; and you shall hear the band in the enclosure playing selections from *Fra Diavolo*, and through the din the susurrus of the surges, and the creaking of the capstan, and the 'Heave oh!' of the fishers, hauling up the *Mary Jane* out of the reach of the advancing spring-tide.

No. 1, however, has not shared in the general advance. No. 1 still dines at one, and has tea at seven, and sups at nine, for No. 1 does not affect the mode, but is only the residence of Alderman and ex-Mayor Bellamy, a mere local magnate.

On this night in November, the worthy alderman is enjoying his tea in his drawing-room, and we will look in upon him, and see how the past ten years have affected him and his fair partner.

Lucy Bellamy is as beautiful as ever, a charming

model of an English matron. Still of the placid forehead, the limpid eyes, and flowing lines of figure, which mature age has only developed and rounded to perfection.

Happy Tom! A little girl of eight is climbing about his knees, and claiming a share of the teacake he is consuming. But Tom hasn't worn so well. There are wrinkles enough about his forehead, and round his eyes; when his mouth is at rest, it is a little drawn down at the corners. Seen now as he leans back and shuts his eyes, it is a sad and weary face; but it brightens up into life and love as his wife leans over his chair, and pushes the hair off his forehead in the old caressing way.

'You look so worn out, Tom, dear; it must have been a very trying day for you, poor fellow! Mr Birkin was such a kind friend, wasn't he, Tom?'

Tom granted some unintelligible answer, which his wife took for assent, and went on: 'You mustn't grieve, Tom, dear. He lived his appointed time, and he's now reaping the reward of his long life of good deeds.'

You see Mrs Tom was rather given to preaching; but then she was so good and devout herself, that her only grief almost was that her dear, good Tom didn't seem to think so much of spiritual things as he ought.

'Yes,' said Tom; 'he lived his appointed time; but for all that, I wish he'd lived a little longer.'

'Ah, Tom, we mustn't repine,' said the sweet homilist. 'Didn't Arthur Birkin feel it very much?'

'By Jove!' said Tom, 'I wish I'd felt it the same way. The old boy left every penny to Arthur.'

'Oh, I'm so glad, Tom! I was afraid he didn't like Arthur, and that he'd leave his money away to the Burgesses: he was so fond of the Burgesses.'

'Tell you what, Lu; what old Birkin was fond of was the bank: he worshipped the bank. Do you think he'd leave his money to be squandered by those dashing Burgesses? No. He saw what a hard skinflint Arthur was, and he didn't like him, for the old man wasn't a bad sort himself; but for all that, he knew that Arthur would keep up the bank; and that's the secret of it.'

'Do you know, Tom, I thought perhaps he'd leave you something?'

'Well, he didn't; that's all,' said Tom roughly; and Lucy retreated to her own seat, rather offended. Tom shut his eyes again, and leaned wearily back in his chair. Mrs Tom softened again as she watched his pale face.

'Tom, dear, I'm afraid you're worrying.'

'Well, I've had a good deal to try me lately.'

'In business you mean, Tom?'

'Well, yes.'

'But Tom, dear, you shouldn't let your mind dwell so much upon business. Think, dear, that you should lean upon a Higher Power, who orders everything as He wills.'

'Ah!' said Tom with a sigh that came from the bottom of his heart.

For the last ten years, Tom's religion had been this—to clear the firm with Birkin's bank. For this he had risen early, and late taken rest, and eaten the bread of carefulness. This accomplished, he would live his life in peace and thankfulness. The load he had heaped upon his own back had

been very heavy upon him. At first, the consciousness that he had done his duty bore him up on his uphill way. That he had fulfilled his uncle's dying wish; that he had kept his memory from reproach; that he had saved Lucy and her aunt from destitution, and borne up the credit of the old firm: these were thoughts that sustained and comforted him. And then he knew full well that this was the price he had paid for his wife, for Lucy would never have married the man who had refused to carry out his solemn promise, made on his uncle's death-bed. But as years rolled on, and Tom's mind cleared itself from the mists of boyish enthusiasm, he took a very different view of the matter.

Tom's troubles came upon him with redoubled force this night. He had struggled so hard the last ten years; and he had so nearly succeeded—so nearly succeeded! But Birkin's death would probably ruin him; he would go down within reach of land. He had left home that morning with a hopeful heart.

The old man had been so kind to him in his lifetime; not a wicked old man of the sea, choking the life out of his slave, but a kind, considerate old man, driving him quietly, and letting him take breath ever and again. Surely he would leave him something: he might even leave him the amount of his indebtedness, for the bank had, after all, been paid nearly all the original debt, and the estate could so well afford it; for Birkin & Co. were shaky no longer. The waste of building-land, and the shells of tenantless houses, on which the firm had made such large advances, which, on the failure of the land-jobbers, and the building-jobbers, and the working-builders, the bank had been obliged to take possession of, and which had caused such a lock-up of capital: this piece of marsh by the seaside was now covered by aristocratic mansions, gorgeous squares, and noble terraces, and had proved a perfect Pactolus, streaming gold into the coffers of the bank. 'Oh!' thought Tom, 'if I can come back to my wife a free man to-night, there won't be a happier dog in England than I! But it wasn't to be. As Tom sat by the fire that night, he felt tightening round his neck the wretched burden of his life.'

As Tom sat by the fire, he looked at his wife, busy with some feminine work, one shapely hand holding the thread, whilst the other drove a tiny shuttle to and fro. Gracie sat coiled on the floor, leaning against her mother's knee, absorbed in a story-book, her lips just parted, and one little hand playing with a straggling curl. And then the thought came into his mind—it had been there often before, but unacknowledged, driven away, before it took shape; but now he took it up, and handled and examined it—the thought was a question: 'Was she worth it?'

'Yes; by Heaven!' was Tom's exclamation. It broke out unawares; it frightened his wife out of her wits, and made Gracie jump on to her feet.

'Papa!' said Lucy; and there was a world of mild reproach in her voice.

'Mamma,' said Gracie, a little casuist, deeply read in all the lore of catechism and commandment, 'wasn't that taking the name of God's holy dwelling in vain?'

'No, not in vain, my darling,' said Tom, drawing her to him, and giving her a long lingering kiss—'not in vain.'

Next morning at breakfast Mr Bellamy told his wife that he had made up his mind to insure his life.

'But why, Tom?'

'I think it only prudent, my dear; so much of the business depends on my own work, that I ought to take care of your future, in case anything should happen to me.'

Mrs Tom put down the coffee-pot, and looked at her husband with suffused eyes. That anything should happen to Tom! 'But, Tom, dear, you don't feel ill, or anything?'

'The insurance doctors will take care of that, Lucy: they won't insure my life if there's any prospect of my premature death.'

'But, Tom, isn't there Aunt Drux's ten thousand pounds? Poor aunt! she told me just before she died what a comfort it was to her that we were so well provided for; and I was so pleased, Tom, that she left it to you, instead of settling it, or anything—it shewed such confidence in you, dear Tom.'

'Delightful!' said Tom, who didn't know exactly what he was saying.

'Well, then, Tom, if anything should happen, we should have enough to live upon; and just what would keep Gracie and me, would be all we should want without you, Tom.'

'Ah, the ten thousand your aunt left is in the business. But I shall never make you understand, Lucy. I can only say that I think it necessary to insure my life.'

Tom went to Mr Winter's office—Winter senior was dead, and Archibald ruled in his stead. He was agent for the 'Legal Luminary,' the 'Dubious and Disputable,' and one or two other life offices.

'Want to insure your life, Tom? Of course; what every prudent man ought to do. I told you long ago you should do it. What amount do you intend to propose for?'

'Ten thousand pounds.'

The last ten years have not made much change in Archie Winter. Except that he has had his hair cut—that instead of displaying a whole bosom-full of shirt-front, he is buttoned tightly up to his chin, in an Oxford Mixture suit, you wouldn't notice any alteration in him.

He cast a quick look at Tom from under his bushy eyebrows.

'Biggish sum, isn't it?'

'Not more than it ought to be,' said Tom. 'Nobody but myself could work the business so economically. Were I to die, it would be necessary to have a manager at five hundred pounds a year or so, besides a clerk or two: I don't want my wife to suffer pecuniarily by my death.'

'Still, after all, Tom, there would be a good income left for your widow.'

'Archie, I don't mind telling you, what I dare say you know; I've got borrowed capital in the business. Now, if I were to die, that would probably be called in. Well, this insurance would replace it.'

'Just so,' said Winter; 'I quite see your motives. Well, I shall be very glad to take your proposals. Suppose we say three thousand pounds in the Legal, three thousand in the Dubious, and two thousand each in the Highland Husbands and Scotch Veritable? Well, it's easily arranged. You'll fill up these forms: they're much about the same; some of 'em want to know if your

grandmother wore false teeth, and some of 'em only ask if your father was troubled with corns.' Mr Winter here enjoyed a hearty laugh at his own joke. I fancy Artemus Ward borrowed this joke, but he didn't acknowledge it.

Tom had to go up to London, the assurance being a heavy one; and was poked about by the united doctors of the four companies, and questioned most minutely as to all his habits. He had frequent interviews with four boards of directors and four secretaries. The result was satisfactory. The united doctors could find no fault with Tom's constitution or physique. The united boards could find no flaw in Tom's reasons for insuring so heavily. There was no agent for whom the societies had a higher regard than Mr Archibald Winter. He was perfectly satisfied. The directors were perfectly satisfied. The proposals were accepted; and Tom had to draw a cheque for three hundred and sixty-seven pounds, the amount of the united premiums.

THE HILL-TRIBES OF CHITTAGONG.

Rising from the rice-swamps and level land of the Chittagong district, in the presidency of Bengal, a vast extent of mountainous country, inhabited by various tribes, covering an area of 6796 miles, is known as the Chittagong Hill-tracts, and is subjected to British rule. The eastern frontier of this strange and distant country is but three hundred miles from the western boundary of China, so that our ideas are at once transported far and wide when we begin to learn what Captain Lewin has to tell us concerning our fellow-subjects there.* It is an interesting country; and they are a strange people, separated from our general and vague notions of 'Indians' by their habits, their speech, and their traditions—resembling not at all 'the mild Hindu,' with whom we have been considerably disenchanted of late years, and as unlike the dwellers in tropical regions of the other continents. The landscape is for the most part sombre, with its traces of volcanic action, its long reaches of still water, and its walls of dark-green verdure; but there are occasional glimpses of wonderful beauty, when 'dark cliffs of a brown vitreous rock, patched and mottled with lichens and mosses of various colours, tower up on either side, while on the right or left shoots back a dark gorge of impenetrable jungle.' Here is a picture of the strange and lavish handiwork of Nature in her remote recesses. 'I remember,' says Captain Lewin, 'once going up the Twine Khyong, a tributary of the Matamoree, whose stream ran briskly in a narrow pebbly bed, between banks that rose almost perpendicularly, and so high that the sun only came down to us by glints here and there. Enormous tree-ferns hung over our heads, some fifty feet up; while the straight stems of the "gurjun" tree shot up without a branch, like white pillars in a temple; plantains, with their broad drooping fronds of transparent emerald, broke at intervals the dark-green wall of jungle

* *The Hill-tracts of Chittagong, and the Dwellers therein.* By Captain T. H. Lewin, Deputy-commissioner of Hill-tracts. Calcutta.

that towered up in the background; and from some gnarled old forest giant here and there the long curving creepers threw across the stream a bridge of Nature's own making. Sometimes we came upon a recess in the bank of verdure which rose on either hand, and there the tinkling of a cascade would be heard behind the veil, its entry into the stream being marked by a great gray heap of rounded rocks and boulders, toppled and tossed about in a way that shewed with what a sweep the water came down in the rains. Scarlet dragon-flies, and butterflies of purple, gold, and azure, flitted like jewels across our path; while silvery fish, streaked with dark-blue bands, flew up the stream before us like flashes of light as we poled along.'

Large and richly alluvial plains, covered with forest trees, are found in many parts of the district, which, if cleared, would be admirably adapted for plough-cultivation; and far in the jungle are tanks, fruit-trees, and the remains of masonry buildings—evidence that in some bygone time the land was cultivated and inhabited by men of the plains. They never come there now; the climate sets an insuperable barrier between them: it is innocuous to the hill-men, but deadly to those of the plains, with its tremendous rains and dense fogs. There are no hot winds, and the hottest part of the year is tempered by cool sea-breezes, so that Europeans might bear a residence in the Hill-tracts very well. It is the custom of the people to remain in their villages until the cultivation season commences in May, and then the whole country-side moves up, every man to his patch of cultivation on some lofty hill. In this custom Captain Lewin traces their comparative immunity from sickness, 'for,' he says, 'hill-men, on abandoning their usual mode of life, and taking to other occupations not involving the periodical move to the hill-tops, are nearly as much subject to fever as the people of the plains.' Theirs is a strange, self-contained, isolated life, with a periodic state of siege by the weather, as, during the rainy season, it is almost impossible to move about the country, which has no roads, on account of the rising of the hill-streams. Before the setting in of the rains, the hill-people lay in a stock of provisions, as at that season of the year the bazaars are abandoned by the men of the plains, and trade almost entirely ceases. The system of commerce is very primitive: its centres are four bazaars, to which the hill-people resort for salt, spices, dried fish, tobacco, and other necessities only procurable from the plains. They bring down for sale cotton and timber, the oil-bearing seeds of a certain tree which grows in the jungle, and small quantities of ivory and wax. The Hill-tracts are peculiarly well suited for the production of cotton; and measures have been taken to introduce improved varieties of the plant among the hill-tribes. Throughout the whole district, large tracts of valuable forest trees are found. The fir-tree and the caoutchouc abound in the lofty hills in the east; but the 'unsatisfactory relations' which exist between the hill-tribes under English rule and those more remote, prevent any use being made of these valuable forest products.

In the wilder parts of the district, a curious natural product is found, which reminds one of the

wondrous 'travellers' tree' of the Malay forests. Captain Lewin describes it thus: 'The forest trees are festooned with numerous creepers (*phyto-crene*), hanging in a labyrinth of coils from every tree: some are as thick as a man's arm. On cutting one of these, water is obtained; and as they grow on the loftiest hill, where water is often not obtainable, this property of theirs is most useful. The most curious thing is, that should the coil be cut in one place only, so as to leave two pendent ends, no water issues. It is necessary to cut a piece clean out of the creeper with two quick consecutive strokes, before water is obtained. If, with an unskilled hand, three or four hacks are made before severing it, the only result is a dry stick. Two speedy cuts, however, and from the piece of creeper trickles out about half a tumblerful of clear cool water. The hill-men explain this by saying that when the stem is cut, the water tries to run away upward.'

In every country there is some one gift of Nature of supreme value and importance, the central object of the life of the people. The Arctic seal, the African plaitain, the Arabian camel, the Icelandic reindeer, the Chinese rice-field, are balanced in Chittagong by the bamboo and the cane, which grow in profusion in the hills. Here is a lucid and animated description of the place they occupy: 'The cane is the hill-man's rope; with it he weaves baskets, binds his house together, and throws bridges over the hitherto impassable hill-torrents. The bamboo is literally his staff of life. He builds his house of the bamboo; he fertilises his fields with its ashes; of its stem he makes vessels in which to carry water; with two bits of bamboo he can produce fire; its young and succulent shoots provide a dainty dinner-dish; and he weaves his sleeping-mat of fine slips thereof. The instruments with which his women weave their cotton are of bamboo. He makes drinking-cups of it; and his head at night rests on a bamboo pillow; his forts are built of it; he catches fish, makes baskets and stools, and thatches his house with the help of the bamboo. He smokes from a pipe of bamboo, and from bamboo ashes he obtains potash. Finally, his funeral pile is lighted with bamboo. The hill-man would die without the bamboo; and the thing he finds hardest of credence is, that in other countries the bamboo does not grow, and that men live in ignorance of it. In Central India there is a migratory tribe called Bhatos, who follow the profession of athlete, and perform most of their feats with the aid of a bamboo; and this tribe have actually deified it. Their patron goddess is Korewa, an incarnation of Mahadeva. Her shrine is situated at Kittoor, around which dense forests of bamboo grow. One they select, and the attendants of the temple consecrate it. It is called *gunnichari*, or chief, and receives their worship annually. To it, as to a human chief, all respect is shewn; and in cases of marriage, of disputes requiring arbitration, the *gunnichari* is erected in the midst of the councillors or arbitrators, and all prostrate themselves before it, before commencing their discussions.' One of the tribes of the Hill-tracts offers worship to the bamboo, but not in the same sense as the Bhatos; they regard it as the impersonation of the deity of the forest.

There is nothing unpleasant or degraded in the picture drawn by Captain Lewin of the hill-people, of whom he writes with humanity, sympathy, and

appreciation, which, could we but hope they would be more generally felt and manifested by the representatives of English authority in India, might gloriously change the moral history of English rule, and largely influence the destinies of the eastern world. Before he enters upon an account of their origin and their characteristics, he describes their mode of cultivation, which is known as 'joom,' and contrasts their hill-life eloquently and advantageously with that of the dweller in the plains. 'In the month of April, a convenient piece of forest-land is fixed upon, generally on a hill-side; the luxuriant undergrowth of shrubs and creepers has to be cleared away, and the smaller trees felled, the trees of larger growth to be stripped of their branches, and left standing. Although the clearing of a patch of dense jungle is no doubt very severe labour, yet the surroundings of the labourer render his work pleasurable in comparison with the toilsome and dirty task of the cultivators of the plains. On the one hand, the hill-man works in the shade of the jungle that he is cutting; he is on a lofty eminence where every breeze reaches and refreshes him; his spirits are enlivened and his labour is lightened by the beautiful prospect stretching out before him; while the rich and varied scenery of the forest stirs his mind above a monotone. He is surrounded by his comrades; the scent of the wild thyme, and the buzzing of the forest bee, are about him; the young men and maidens sing to their work; and the laugh and joke go round as they sit down to their mid-day meal, under the shade of some great mossy forest tree. On the other hand, consider the toil of the cultivator of the plains. He maunders along, with pokes and anathemas, at the tail of a pair of buffaloes, working mid-leg in mud; around him stretches an uninterrupted vista of muddy rice-land—there is not a bough or a leaf to give him shelter from the blazing noonday sun. His women are shut up in some cabin, jealously surrounded by jungle; and if he is able to afford a scanty meal during the day, he will munch it *solus*, sitting beside his muddy plough. Add to this, that by his comparatively pleasurable toil the hill-man can gain two rupees for one which the wretched ryot of the plain can painfully earn, and it is not to be wondered at that the hill-people have a passion for their mode of life, and regard with absolute contempt any proposal to settle down to the tame and monotonous cultivation of the dwellers in the lowlands.' The migration of the people when 'jooming' begins, and the villages are quite abandoned, is a curious thing to witness, also the assembling of the various jooming parties. Men and women, boys and girls, each bind on the left hip a small basket filled with the mixed seeds of cotton, rice, melons, pumpkins, and Indian corn; each takes a 'dao,' or hill-knife, in hand, and every hill-side soon echoes to their hill-call (a cry like the Swiss jodel), as party answers party from the paths winding up each hill-side to their respective patches of cultivation. Arrived at the joom, the family will form a line, and steadily work their way across the field. A dig with the blunt square end of the dao makes a narrow hole about three inches deep; into this is put a small handful of the mixed seeds, and the sowing is completed. A solitary joom is very rare; they are almost always in close propinquity, and mutual help is cheerfully given. The first

thing to ripen is the Indian corn; then come the melons, to which succeed all sorts of vegetables; finally, in September, the rice and other grain, to which the monkeys and the jungle-fowl do much damage. In October, the cotton crop is gathered, completing the harvest.

The country suffers severely from the visitations of rats. 'They arrive,' says Captain Lewin, 'in swarms, and sweep everything before them; they eat up the standing corn, and empty the granaries of the hill-people—nothing stops them. They are said to come from the south, and they disappear as suddenly as they make their appearance. The hill-folk gravely assured me that during the last visitation, which occurred in 1864, the rats were transformed into jungle-fowl: in proof of this, they point out a peculiar dragging feather in the tails of the jungle-fowl, which they assert to be a rat's tail.'

Throughout the whole of the Hill-tracts, Captain Lewin has known no instance of a hill-man cultivating with the plough; in the few instances in which some acres of ploughed land may be seen near the villages of the chiefs, they are invariably tended by Bengalee servants engaged for the purpose. The deserted villages present a curious appearance, having all the evidences of occupation and recent life, but every living creature having disappeared. The migrating people leave half their property behind them: granaries containing grain, the women's weaving implements—all sorts of things to be removed at their leisure; and this they do with perfect safety, for 'there are no thieves in the hills!'

To be a good and successful hunter is a great merit in the estimation of these people, whose country abounds in almost every species of wild animal. The elephant roams over the district in large herds, and the Assam rhinoceros is common; likewise the boa-constrictor, which is of enormous size. The domesticated animals are the cow, the buffalo, the goat, the dog, the cat, the pig, and the common fowl.

The author divides the tribes which inhabit the Hill Chittagong into two classes: 1. The Khyongtha, or Children of the River, who are of pure Aracanese origin, speaking the ancient Aracan dialect, and conforming in every way to Buddhist customs; 2. The Tougtha, or Children of the Hills, who are of mixed origin, and who speak numerous dialects, and are more purely savages than the Children of the River. No record of their origin save that of oral tradition exists among them. The Khyongtha possess a written language, but have no history; the Tougtha have no written character, and their languages express nothing beyond the wants and sensations of uncivilised life. 'The general physique of the hill-tribes,' says Captain Lewin, 'is strongly Mongolian. They are short in stature, not five feet six inches in height. Their faces are broad; the nose flat, with no perceptible bridge; the eyes narrow, and set obliquely in the head; high cheek-bones, and no beard or moustache. They have an honest bright look, with a frank and merry smile; and their look does not belie them, but is a faithful index of their mental characteristics.'

Certain customs are common to all the tribes; for instance, slavery, under two forms—that of the debtor-slave, in which persons borrowed money from the chief, or some other individual, and gave their children or female relatives to serve as menial

servants until the debt should be paid. This custom has been put down, under our rule, with a high hand—not always, as the author shews, judiciously or with desirable results. The other form of slavery which once existed among our tributary tribes is now only carried on by independent tribes beyond our jurisdiction; that is, captivity to the bow and spear, men and women taken by force in war, and sold like cattle from master to master. Concerning this the author says: 'The origin of this custom, if not indeed the origin of the chronic state of warfare in which all hill-people seem to live, was the want of women. Among all hill-people, the woman is the chief toiler, and naturally enough their incessant labour, in all weathers, kills the women of a tribe, or renders them more liable to disease. Hence, among some tribes, we find the strange custom of polyandry prevailing; but among others a simpler course is adopted—the law of the strongest. Those who had few women went with arms in their hands, and took them from a weaker community.'

The Khyoungtha of the Hills are a fine race—manly, upright, and noble. They are firm believers in metempsychosis. There is no such thing as caste among them, all are equal, and the priesthood is not perpetual. Captain Lewin upholds the moral superiority of Buddhism over Brahminism. 'No one,' he says, 'can go among a people professing the Buddhist faith without seeing their superiority in manliness, truth, self-denial, and all the sterner, nobler class of moral excellences. These characteristics have operated strongly in raising the social status of the weaker sex, and among our hill Buddhists women are respected, and occupy an honourable position. They enjoy great freedom of action, and are unmistakably a power among the people. They, as well as men, can work out their own salvation, and attain "Nirvan." The author's description of the religious ceremonies is very interesting and poetical, sometimes, but rarely, bordering on the grotesque. The dress of the Khyoungtha is simple and graceful, and the men are tattooed: the name of God is marked upon the shoulder. Men and women alike are passionately fond of flowers, and wear many ornaments. In each village community the adults have a head, and the boys also, and the unmarried men and boys sleep in a separate house, as in Borneo. The standard of morality, according to European ideas, is low, but an unfaithful wife is seldom heard of, and family ties and duties are powerful. The ceremonies attendant on marriage and death are complicated and picturesque. Their personal habits are not objectionable, except in one respect—both sexes allow their hair to become very long, and seldom wash it; 'the consequences,' says Captain Lewin, 'may be better imagined than described.' The Khyoungtha do not dance together. Their festive gatherings are enlivened by a travelling theatrical company, which comes round every cold season, and of whose performances the author gives a curious and very amusing description.

The Tougtha are different from the Khyoungtha in many ways. Their villages are generally situated on lofty hills and in places difficult of access. The men wear hardly any clothes, and the women a single scanty petticoat. Upon the women falls all the hardest work, and their position is lower. The religion of the Tougthas is simple—it is that of nature; they worship the elements, and have a vague notion of some divine controlling power.

They are cruel, and attach but little value to life. Reverence and respect are emotions unknown to them; they salute neither their chiefs nor their elders; no form of greeting exists in their many tongues, neither have they any expression conveying thanks. They attach importance to an oath; it is a test in matters pertaining to crime, and by it they ratify engagements. The oath is made upon the things upon which their very existence depends—water, cotton, rice, or the dao, or hill-knife. They are monogamists, and as a rule, good husbands and fathers. Adultery is punished with death. Slavery is a recognised institution, but a man's slaves are his children, and universally well treated. Should a man's wife die, he may marry one of his slaves; his so doing, at once raises her to the position and privileges of a free woman. Each village is a small state, owing fealty to no one save its own leader. A man may leave one chief, and transfer himself and his family to the village of another; hence, the power of different chiefs, which depends upon the size of their respective villages, varies considerably from time to time, according to their success or popularity. They are a healthy and long-lived people, perhaps because they have no medicines, and very few stimulants. After he has given a general account of the hill-tribes, according to their classification as Children of the River and Children of the Hill, Captain Lewin takes them in detail, and gives us a number of interesting particulars concerning the subdivisions. All the details, especially those concerning their religious ceremonies and varying notions of the supernatural, are exceedingly curious. It is good to be instructed in the ways, and taught to understand the condition of, our fellow-men, more especially when they are our fellow-subjects, and our country is responsible for the amelioration, the debasement, or the 'letting alone' of these people. The author of this book, who has lived among the hill-tribes, who likes them, and understands them, puts in a plea, as strong as it is modest, for fair dealing with them on the part of England. 'They are very simple,' he says, 'and honest, and merry, but they have no sympathy with anything above the level of their bodily wants. There are whole tracts of mind, and thought, and feeling which are unknown to them, and which could not be made known by any explanation.' We may make them better and happier, but it must be in their own way, not in ours; not by inspiring them with the thirst for wealth, the desire for the superfluities which attach to our civilisation. There is no starvation among them; they know neither poverty nor riches, and they enjoy perfect social equality. This book explains the condition, mental, moral, and physical, of the inhabitants of an immense district, who are in our power, and for whom we are accountable. The student of them, the pleader for them, is surely the best judge in their case. In these strong and simple words, he epitomises his experience, and formulates his belief: 'What is wanted here is not measures, but a man: place over the hill-tribes an officer gifted with the power of rule; not a mere cog in the great wheel of government, but one tolerant of the failings of his fellow-creatures, and prompt to see and recognise in them the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin—apt to enter into new trains of thought, and to adopt and modify ideas, but cautious in offending national prejudice. Under a guidance like this, let the people by slow degrees civilise

themselves. With education open to them, and yet moving under their own laws and customs, they will turn out, not debased and miniature epitomes of Englishmen, but a new and noble type of God's creatures.'

THE RED NOSE.

In the village of Tattlecombe were many curious persons ; and very small matters sufficed to awaken their curiosity. It was generally satisfied at last, either by incontrovertible proof or by ingenious speculation ; but there was one puzzle which could not be solved either by a collection of facts or a reduction of theories. Everybody wondered, and nobody knew why Mrs Murton had a red nose.

Wherever you went you were sure to hear something about Mrs Murton : you were questioned about her looks ; you could not help confessing that she was a very pretty little woman ; you had to allow that it was a great pity so pretty a little woman had so red a nose ; you were strictly charged to furnish an explanation of the phenomenon ; you were, of course, unable ; and the village of Tattlecombe remained dissatisfied.

The problem had been submitted to a distinguished mathematician who lived in the neighbourhood, who had been very high amongst the wranglers at Cambridge, and who was said to have won his distinction chiefly by a successful solution of problems : and also to the wise woman of the parish, who was supposed to understand the language of the many-twinkling stars, and who could, for a consideration, see looming in the future any kind of husband any silly young woman wished for : but they were both obliged to give it up.

It certainly was no ordinary nose ; and thereby hung a tale. Something else hangs thereby in the case of the upper ten thousand savage women ; a gold ring or a piece of crystal is with them the hanging ornament ; but Mrs Murton was highly civilised and refined, and as to *her* nose, it may be truly said that thereby hung a tale.

Now about red noses there are divers theories ; and most of them are, according to my judgment and experience, wrong. You very seldom see a red nose, which, upon reflection, not in the looking-glass, but in the mind, does not appear to be the right thing in the right place. So much so, in fact, that if you were to meet a certain person of your acquaintance, and were to miss the usual redness of nose, you would at once say : 'My dear So-and-so, you don't look at all well ;' and you would be on the point of adding, by way of explanation : 'Your nose is quite pale.' There is a very prevalent belief that alcohol is at the bottom (or, rather, tip) of every red nose ; but I can (on oath, if necessary) declare that one of the reddest noses I ever saw was above the chin of a man who had been from his youth up almost a Rechabite, and to whom the doctor actually recommended a liberal allowance of generous wine, as the best means of toning down the colour. For a red nose is a great drawback to a clergyman, whose parishioners look

upon it with suspicion ; so that the efficacy of his ministrations is impeded by his nasal deformity. Indeed, the more reprobate amongst the boys of his parish lurk in undiscoverable hiding-places, and greet the reverend gentleman with snatches of a comic song called *Jolly Nose*.

Still there is a fashion of nose which, with a view to conformity, ought to be red, which properly accompanies a certain complexion, which harmonises with cheeks, and ears, and hands, which is undoubtedly the right nose in the right place, and which seems more natural and less remarkable than the most natural red hair.

But on none of these grounds was Mrs Murton's case to be explained. Arethusa was not more unlikely to have had a taste for alcohol ; and, moreover, Mrs Murton's complexion was lovely ; her cheeks, and ears, and hands were as delicately tinted as the daintiest blush-rose ; and her nose, therefore, seemed quite unnatural, and out of place, so far as the colour was concerned—for in other respects it was perfectly natural, being exquisitely shaped, and unexceptionably situated. Mrs Murton was the wife of the vicar, a young man who was reputed to be a prodigy of learning, who had greatly distinguished himself at the university, and who had been presented by his college, not long after he took his degree, to the vicarage of Tattlecombe. It was whispered about, moreover, that Mrs Murton was not unacquainted with awful mysteries ; that she had received what very credulous people are pleased to call a superior education ; that she could read Latin and Italian with equal ease, that is, with considerable ease ; that she was familiar with Greek ; that she had even a smattering of Hebrew ; that she was versed in ancient history, metaphysics, and theology ; and that, woman though she was, she had studied and understood, even if she seldom put them into practice, the principles of logic.

The vicar and his wife had two little children of very tender years, both girls ; and it was remarked that their education and management were left almost entirely to Mrs Murton, who, if ever the vicar attempted to interfere, would turn upon him with a tartness hardly to be expected from her habitual sweetness, and would say to him sharply : 'Pray, allow me to know what is best for girls ;' and would accompany her words with an angry flash of the eye, and a glance of deep meaning, which at once silenced the reverend gentleman, and led witnesses to suppose that there was between Mr and Mrs Murton some secret which gave her an advantage, whenever she chose to exercise it, over her reverend consort.

Close observation led me to believe that the secret to which Mrs Murton owed her power was somehow connected with the red nose, and that the red nose was to Mrs Murton a thorn in the flesh. Many a time, when she had reason to believe she was unnoticed, have I seen her watching it in mirrors and all manner of reflectors ; and every time I have remarked that a cloud momentarily passed over her face, and that for a minute or so after her contemplation she was irritable and snappish. But for a long while I could find no one

who could read me the riddle, who could solve the puzzle which tortured the gossips of Tattlecombe.

Murder, however, will out; and at last I found somebody who could clear up the mystery which hung over Mrs Murton's nose.

I fell in, I am happy to say, with the delightful Mrs Tittle, who herself came from Tattlecombe. Tittle had been a friend of mine from early youth; and so Mrs Tittle admitted me with more than usual readiness to intimate acquaintance. I soon discovered that she was a woman who was sure to know whatever could be known by close inquiry, keen observation, and acuteness of hearing about all her neighbours' affairs: she even seemed to have a key to the cupboards where many of them kept their private skeletons, and so she was clearly the person who should be able to enlighten me. On a favourable opportunity, therefore, I said to her: 'You know Tattlecombe, I believe, Mrs Tittle?'

'O yes,' she answered, 'so well! Dear little Tattlecombe! I know every tombstone and grave-mound in the pretty churchyard; every green lane for ten miles round; every lovely view in the whole neighbourhood; every cow, I verily believe, in the parish; and every queer old gossip in the thatched cottages.'

'And I daresay you know the Murtons?' I rejoined.

'The Murtons!' she replied. 'Ah! that I do—so well. Lily Murton, that is Mrs Murton, who was Lily Bourne, and I, were like sisters when we were at school together. But we have not seen much of one another for the last year or so. Do you know them?'

'Slightly. I was lately staying with a friend of mine at Tattlecombe, and I met them several times.'

'Is she not a pretty little woman?'

'Very.'

'Is it not a pity she has such a dreadfully red nose?'

'A thousand pities: it makes her look like a beautiful peach with a horrid blemish, or a snow-white something with a dirty port-wine stain upon it.'

'Ah! poor thing,' sighed Mrs Tittle, looking at the same time rather pleased than otherwise, 'she paid dearly for her superior learning.'

'Learning!' I exclaimed in astonishment; 'does learning give a lady a red nose?'

'It did in her case,' replied Mrs Tittle laughing.

'Dear me,' said I, 'was it the Latin, or the Greek, or the Hebrew?'

'Oh, I don't know,' she answered, 'that it was the dead languages exactly'—

'Perhaps,' I broke in, 'it was the theology: I knew a theologian with an awfully red nose. Or was it the history? or the metaphysics? or the logic? If she studied nosology, now'—

'I can only tell you,' interrupted Mrs Tittle, 'that it was the learning generally.'

'Well,' I said, 'I knew that learning resembled alcohol so far as getting into your head is concerned, but I did not know that it carried the resemblance so far as to discolour your nose.'

'I will tell you exactly how it happened,' said she confidentially. 'You must know that Lily was engaged to young Murton when he went up to Oxford. He was very good-looking and very

clever, and Lily was quite silly about him, though the Bournes generally didn't like him.'

'Why not?'

'Oh, I really hardly know; but they thought him a conceited young prig.'

'Hear, hear!' I said.

'Now, you mustn't interrupt me,' observed Mrs Tittle severely, 'or I will not tell you my pitiful story. Young Murton, I must tell you, was destined for holy orders; and Lily, who worshipped the clergy in general, was quite ready to worship him in particular. She thought the holy office he was preparing himself for gave him unquestionable authority over her, and she was willing not only to love him (which she could not help), but also to obey him, even before they were married (much more, I suspect, than she obeys him now). Well, he had very prim notions; made Lily quite unhappy by preaching to her about the worldliness and frivolity of her family; and was especially bitter against what he was pleased to call the shallow, flimsy, showy, and even sinful education of young women. So he constituted himself Lily's instructor as well as lover, and insisted upon her taking from him lessons in his horrid Latin, and logic, and things. And as poor little Lily had to keep up her more lady-like accomplishments as well (for her father would not hear of her relinquishing *them*), she had to work like a galley-slave. And I really do think,' continued Mrs Tittle, looking at me appealingly, 'that her father was right; for, though it may be all very well to be just like a man if you are not going to be married, I think that in married life the very diversity of mental culture and attainments tends to prevent unpleasant collision. We wives have often to act towards our husbands the part David acted towards Saul when the evil spirit was upon the son of Kish. But if we had minds trained exactly as our husbands', we should most likely attempt to argue with them, instead of dealing with them by means of enchantments they can appreciate, but can neither practise nor understand. What do you think?'

I, being a bachelor, assented heartily.

'Then, you see,' she went on, 'if women are to receive the education some even of their own sex would give them, they will have double work to do; for they will have to do the new and not leave the old undone (in case they should ever marry).'

I thought it best to mutter something which might sound like entire agreement.

'To resume, then,' said Mrs Tittle. 'Poor little Lily had to work double tides (as they say), and she used, consequently, to read, read, read, both at her meals and directly after them. And in a little while her dear little nose grew red, and, by degrees, redder and redder. It was of no use to tell her what was the reason, or for the doctor to assure her that it was a symptom of indigestion, and that there was nothing so likely to impair digestion as reading at and directly after meals: she vowed, with tears in her eyes, that she "must do the lessons dear George took the trouble to set." Well, different people, I suppose, have different ways of making love; but Lily's and George's must have been the strangest since that one-eyed person, you know, made love to somebody whose name I think began very appropriately with Gal—but'—

'Polyphemus and Galatea?' I asked.

'I daresay,' replied Mrs Tittle. 'Dear little Lily knew all about them; but I don't, though I fancy Handel wrote some music about their love-affair. But let me get on. I assure you I have been staying at the Bourne's when George Murton was there, and he and Lily would remain alone together in the study for hours, and when any of us knocked at the door, and called out to Lily to come into the garden, we very often got no answer, and we could hear George Murton talking angrily about "accents," and "quantities," and "long by position," and all that sort of stuff; and poor little Lily whimpering: "Yes, yes; I beg your pardon, dear George; I quite forgot." And if they did come into the garden, they walked up and down sombly, whilst we played at croquet; and I verily believe he was examining her all the while in some nasty dead language. And he was always lecturing her about Lady Jane Grey and Plato, and exhorting her to set an example to her worldly, frivolous family. After all, I don't think George Murton had done himself much good with all his Hebrew and theology; I am sure his temper was very bad, and many a time I have seen him fling out of the house in an ungovernable rage, leaving Lily sobbing in the study; and when Lily was asked what was the matter, she would say: "Oh, George is so angry. I couldn't say my Virgil by heart." Or: "Whatever shall I do! I made three false quantities in two lines, and that hurts poor George's feelings more than anything." Or: "I couldn't give a proper account of the Manichean heresy, and George says he can't love me."'

'I wonder she could love him,' said I; 'I wonder she didn't treat him as Omphale treated Hercules.'

'She was infatuated, you should remember,' rejoined Mrs Tittle; 'whereas in the case you mention I believe the infatuation was on the side of the gentleman. And there really was some ground for Lily's infatuation. She and her family went once or twice to Oxford, and heard George Murton recite his prize exercises; and Lily's love was mingled with something like the awful fascination exercised by the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, when she heard the cheers which greeted the repeated appearance of George Murton as he came forward time after time in his capacity of prize-man, and when she saw how his good looks became more than beauty under the influence of applause. No wonder she clung to him as to a higher power. Besides, at those visits to Oxford he relaxed a little; and Lily then thought him so kind as well as good and noble, that he completely subjugated her. As for him, I never saw anybody so imperious to another as he was to her; and, though I suppose he really loved her, I believe his love varied directly as her success in doing the papers he set her. I know that he postponed (fancy the gentleman postponing the happy day!) their marriage for three months, until she could satisfy his worship in history and logic; and the logic paper, Lily told me, was the hardest and most repugnant work she ever had to do in her life. At last, they were married; but he had spoiled her beauty for ever.'

'She does not appear to be in much awe of him now,' I remarked.

'No,' rejoined Mrs Tittle laughing. 'You see he gets no prizes now, no distinctions, no acclamations; even his learning is of very little use to

him where he is. He is, as a member of ordinary society, quite a commonplace person; and, besides, she is not fearful of losing him now, and she can always twit him with having caused her only personal blemish.'

'Ah,' I broke in, 'not even Socrates could have borne that from Xantippe without wincing.'

'I don't know any Saint Tibby,' rejoined Mrs Tittle, looking suspicious; 'but I was just going to say that, as for Lily's own learning, it certainly enabled her to marry the man she loved, but she has long since discovered that it is of no further service to her. It is out of place in the circle in which she moves; and, though her reputation for it may do her good with some, it does her harm with others; and, moreover, she hasn't time to keep it up, and is forgetting it all in attending to her children and household. All this she feels deeply, and she throws it in the teeth of George Murton. She has found out also that taking holy orders does not necessarily sanctify the taker; and that an ordained sinner is but an unordained sinner with a difference—especially of necktie.'

'But Mr and Mrs Murton seem to be tolerably happy together.'

'O dear, yes; quite as happy as most married couples, if not happier; but the varnish has gone off the gentleman, and the blemish remains on the lady.'

'You mean the red nose?'

'Yes. The poor little thing confessed to me that she feels the infliction more than a sensible and Christian woman should feel such a thing. But then she pleads that it is so very peculiar in her case; she has the mortification of knowing that it might have been prevented; and she cannot help seeing that people notice it, or fearing—not without ground, as I know—that they attribute it to a wrong cause. She believed that by altering her habits after she had secured George for better and worse, she would be able at her leisure to get rid of her disfigurement; but one must not trifle with one's digestive organs, which, when they have once been upset, are almost as incapable as Humpty Dumpty of being set up again. She has tried exercise, regular diet, and every kind of pill ever invented for the cure of indigestion; but if she have at all improved her digestive organs (and I should think the contrary is more likely), she has made no change for the better in her appearance. She has even condescended to write (anonymously, of course) to those papers which give advice as to the removal of freckles, tan, redness, &c.; but to no purpose. She has sat for an hour at a time with her feet in cold water, but that obstinate nose refuses to be unreddened, and she remains a warning to all lovely and confiding girls who try, at the expense of their digestions, to secure the affections of pedantic lovers.'

Such is the history of Mrs Murton's red nose; and it causes one to fear that the project which is gaining favour of making girls solidly learned as well as elegantly accomplished may have a baleful effect upon their noses. Let the maids of merry England see to it.

As for men who mourn over their red noses, and would feel hurt by such a remark as one 'bus driver does not scruple to address to another, saying: 'This here frosty weather seem to suit you, Tom; that there old beak o' yours is a-colourin' beautiful,' they may derive some comfort

from the following quotation taken from the works of a popular writer, not of the masculine gender: 'He had a fair complexion, a small straight nose—very red, womanish lips, a slightly receding chin, a low forehead, large blue eyes, and light auburn hair. He was rather handsome, and was generally said to have a most prepossessing countenance.'

What more could a reasonable man wish for? It should be mentioned, however, that the popular writer's red-nosed man with the prepossessing countenance poisoned his brother, and committed bigamy.

LOVERS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

THE recent death of two lovers, struck by lightning in a field, is paralleled to a remarkable degree by an event which took place a century and a half ago, and which exercised the pens of three of our poets—Pope, Gay, and Thomson. It curiously marks the difference between the two periods, that the catastrophe was treated poetically at that time; whereas now our newspapers are 'ventilating' it as a matter of science, connected with currents, fluids, positive and negative electricity, and so forth.

Briefly, the episode in George I.'s reign was as follows (it will be found somewhat more fully treated in *Chambers's Book of Days*): On the 31st of July 1718, John Hewit and Sarah Drew were in a field near Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire. They were rustic lovers; he about twenty-five years of age, and she a comely maiden a little younger. They were betrothed, and had on that very morning obtained the consent of the parents on both sides to their marriage, which was to take place in the next following week. Pope and Gay were both guests at Stanton Harcourt at the time; and the latter recorded the tragic incident of the day in the following words: 'Between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, the clouds grew black, and such a storm of thunder and lightning ensued, that all the labourers made the best of their way to what shelter the trees and hedges afforded. Sarah was frightened, and fell down in a swoon on a heap of barley; John, who never separated from her, having raked together two or three heaps, the better to secure her from the storm. Immediately after was heard so loud a crash as if the heavens had split asunder. Every one was now solicitous for the safety of his neighbour, and they called to one another throughout the field. No answer being returned to those who called to the lovers, they stepped to the place where they lay. They perceived the barley all in a smoke, and then spied the faithful pair; John with one arm about Sarah's neck, and the other held over her, as if to screen her from the lightning. They were struck dead, and stiffened in this tender posture. Sarah's left eye was injured, and there appeared a black spot on her breast. Her lover was blackened all over; not the least sign of life was found in either. Attended by their melancholy companions, they were conveyed to the town, and next day were interred in Stanton Harcourt churchyard.'

Pope wrote the following epitaph on the unfortunate pair:

When eastern lovers feed the funeral fire,
On the same pile the faithful pair expire:
Here pitying Heaven, that virtue mutual found,
And blasted both, that it might neither wound.
Hearts so sincere, th' Almighty saw well pleased,
Sent his own lightning, and the victims seized.

It is said that Lord Harcourt, at whose house Pope was staying (and in a room of which, hence called 'Pope's Study,' he finished the fifth book of his *Iliad*), feared that this epitaph would be a little beyond the comprehension of the simple villagers around; whereupon the poet wrote a second, which was engraved on a stone in the parish church of Stanton Harcourt. It ran thus:

Near this place lie the bodies
Of JOHN HEWIT and SARAH DREW,
An industrious young man
And virtuous young maiden of this parish;
Who, being at harvest-work
(With several others),
Were in one instant killed by lightning,
The last day of July 1718.

Think not by rigorous judgment seized,
A pair so faithful could expire;
Victims so pure Heaven saw well pleased,
And snatched them in eternal fire.

Live well, and fear no sudden fate;
When God calls victims to the grave,
Alike 'tis justice soon or late,
Mercy alike to kill or save.

Virtue unmoved can hear the call,
And face the flash that melts the ball.

It is believed that Thomson had this incident in his thoughts when he wrote the lines (in his *Seasons*) beginning

Young Celadon
And his Amelia were a matchless pair.

On Sunday, September 5, 1869, Thomas Hardaker and Emma Carrick were walking in the fields near Leeds, on a footpath leading from Stanningley to Farsley. The young man was a toy-dealer; and the young woman a weaver, employed at one of the woollen mills which so abound in that neighbourhood. The couple had been Sunday-school teachers together, were betrothed, and had arranged to be married in a month or two. On the Sunday afternoon they took tea at the house of the poor girl's father at Stanningley; then walked to Farsley, where Hardaker was staying; and were returning when the catastrophe befell them. They took a field-path, and were last seen alive in conversation in a narrow road, bounded by two walls. They retreated a little towards Farsley, on seeing that a storm was coming on, and took partial shelter behind a garden-wall. Two iron gates or palisadings were on either side of them at no great distance; and these metals are supposed to have had an intimate connection with the sad result. It was about nine o'clock in the evening, dark, and gloomy; rain fell slightly, then heavily, and vivid

flashes of lightning were followed by terrible peals of thunder. The circumstances led to a supposition that the lightning, attracted by the iron of the first gate, swept onward to the second, and caught the hapless couple on the way. No one saw the death-stroke; but the evidence afterwards adduced lent support to this supposition.

At eleven o'clock on that night, a cloth-weaver, passing that way, almost trod on the bodies of the two young people, who were lying across the footpath near one of the gates. He touched them with his umbrella, and bade them get up, thinking they were intoxicated; but as they were senseless and motionless, he hastened for a lantern. It was then found that the poor young people were really dead. Emma Carriek was lying flat on her face, Thomas Hardaker on his back; her dress was but little touched, but his right boot was split or ripped up. The only actual mark of lightning on the bodies was to be seen on the faces, which were scarred and burned about the forehead and nose. Besides the ripping up of the young man's boot, small holes were burned in his shirt and his purse. Gold, silver, and copper, in the purse and the pocket, were partially melted; and two shilling-pieces were fused together. So little was the discoloration of the faces, that when the lovers were laid out side by side, they seemed to be tranquilly asleep. No poet was near, to write monody or epitaph; but the sad event made a deep impression on the neighbours, by whom the young couple were well known and respected.

There is something very mysterious in these attacks of lightning on the human body. We know in a sort of rough, general way that metals and other substances differ greatly in their power of conducting electricity; but science must advance beyond its present stage before we can lay down infallible rules for guidance. Some persons have supposed that lightning does not penetrate far beneath the surface of the ground; but in 1843 three men were struck with a flash at the bottom of a mine six hundred feet deep—the lightning having passed down a chain in the shaft. Others, again, believe that safety is to be found in bed. It certainly is so generally, but by no means universally. In 1828, lightning attacked a cottage near Chichester, destroyed with a crash the wooden part of a bedstead, threw the bed-clothes on the ground, and with it the mattress and a person who was sleeping on it—fortunately without further mischief. Again, in the same year, near Doncaster, a flash of lightning tore the coverlet from a bed, but without doing any injury to its occupant. Again, in 1772, Mr Heartley of Harrogate was killed by lightning while asleep in his bed; his wife, lying by his side, was not even awakened by the shock. A Roman Catholic church was once struck by lightning during the celebration of mass; two of the three officiating priests were struck dead, while the third remained untouched. Sometimes trees are sought, sometimes shunned, for shelter during thunder-storms, according to the prevalence of certain opinions. Some years ago, a theory was broached to the effect that lightning often strikes the elm, chestnut, oak, pine, and sometimes the ash, but not the beech, birch, or maple; then there was an assertion that, when the oak and the pine grow near together, the latter escapes while the former is attacked. Generally speaking, however, the

opinion prevails pretty strongly, that the further distant we are from trees during a thunder-storm the better. The supposed protective power of glass, too, is not always reliable. In 1780, two persons were killed at Eastbourne while standing inside a window during a thunder-storm; the glass was reduced to powder, but the wood-work of the window remained uninjured. Any articles of metal worn about the person are pretty certain to increase the danger from lightning. In 1819, lightning attacked the prison at Biberach, and out of twenty prisoners in one apartment, attacked only a brigand who was chained round the waist, leaving the others unscathed. In 1749, during a thunder-storm, a lady raised her arm to shut a window; the lightning flashed, and 'a golden bracelet so completely disappeared that not a vestige of it could be found,' without the lady herself being hurt. The complete disappearance of the bracelet is probably a bit of exaggeration. The melting, without the actual disappearance, is credible; for in 1844, a lightning-flash struck a fishing-boat off the Shetland Islands, shivered the mast, and melted a watch in the pocket of a man sitting near the mast, without scorching his clothes or injuring him. In 1858, when a peasant-woman was killed by lightning near Auxerre in France, not a wound was found on her body, but a silver comb was melted in her hair—probably defining the spot where the death-stroke was given. Brydone relates an incident of a lady whose bonnet was reduced to ashes while she was looking out of a window at a thunder-storm: it is supposed that the wire in the bonnet attracted the electricity. It is, however, not very likely that ladies will adopt the highly scientific precaution suggested by him for such occasions: 'Every lady should wear a small chain or thread of brass wire, which she should hang, during the time of a thunder-storm, to the wires of her bonnet, by which the fulminating matter might pass to the earth, instead of traversing the head and other members.'

Not the least embarrassing of the questions which arise in reference to lightning-flashes is to guess in what way the action will shew itself when two or more persons are near each other in a line or in a curve. Will it act most at the extremities of the line, or in the middle? In 1808, a lightning-flash struck a house in a Swiss village: five children were sitting on a bench; it killed the first and last in the row, but gave only a violent shock to the others. In 1858, at Drome in France, a lightning-flash killed a young girl in a farm-house, but left untouched a child in her arms. It is not yet known whether horses and other quadrupeds resist the effects of lightning less safely or more safely than human beings; for some recorded facts tell on the one side, some on the other. In 1785, lightning attacked a stable at Rambouillet: thirty-two horses were in a row; thirty were overturned, of which two at the extreme ends of the line were killed. In 1801, a miller near Chartres was walking between a horse and a mule; the two animals were struck dead by lightning, while the man escaped with slight injury. In 1781, three French gentlemen were out riding: a lightning-flash killed all three of the horses, but only one of the riders. In 1826, a boy was leading a mare on a road near Worcester: a thunder-storm came on, which killed the mare, but left the boy unhurt. In 1810, a gentleman was sitting with his dog by

his side: a lightning-flash killed the dog, but only gave a slight shock to the gentleman. In 1858, while a clergyman near Leatherhead was riding in a fly with two members of his family, a lightning-flash struck the driver from his seat, without hurting the other persons or the horses. There is almost as much doubt whether the popular view is correct, that water is less attacked by lightning than land. Kaempfer stated that the emperors of Japan were wont to take refuge in a grotto containing a reservoir of water during a thunder-storm. Do the Tycoon and the Micado, of whom we hear so much now-a-days, practise the same cunning device? That fish are stunned in the water there is sufficient proof. In 1772, lightning attacked the river Doubs near Besançon, and stunned the fish, which were floated along by the stream. In 1670, a lightning-flash fell on the lake of Zirknitz in Austria; and 'such a quantity of fish almost immediately floated upon the surface, that the neighbouring inhabitants collected twenty-eight wagon-loads for manure.'

HOSPITAL-VISITING.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL.'

SIR—You were good enough to insert a paper bearing the above title in last month's *Journal*, which has been the means of my receiving various sums of money and contributions of clothing and books for the patients of a London hospital.

I am now going to ask you to allow your *Journal* to be the medium of my acknowledgment of the anonymous contributions only—all others having been acknowledged by letter. For these, I need only repeat my thanks.

I wish to mention, for the information of those who sent sums *specially* for Mrs Dean, that I have not been able to find her since my return to town. I have, however, one clue to her, as her husband is on board a friend's ship, now nearly due. If I fail to discover her, or if I hear of her death, after a reasonable time, I shall either return the said money, or ask leave to apply it to some other case.

It has been suggested to me that in my former paper I did not allude to the Samaritan Fund, the object of which is to assist destitute patients on leaving. It is true that such funds exist in connection with more than one London hospital, and I know that the good they do cannot be over-rated; but I also know that the number of destitute patients is great, and the means of the fund are limited, so limited, that my own small experience has taught me that there is still ample room for individual exertion in the same direction. It is for the assistance of those whom the Samaritan and similar Funds cannot assist, that the appeal was written, which has been so generously responded to by the readers of your *Journal*.

Lastly, though, for obvious reasons, I do not name the hospital referred to, it might still be recognised by a few; and lest I should unwillingly have given any impression to the contrary, I would here gladly testify to the excellent management—the good order, cleanliness, and comfort of the arrangements, and the unvarying kindness and care shewn to the patients. My appeal was made, not because the hospital did not do enough, but because it was impossible it could do more.

The bag is still incomplete; but the first instalment will shortly be sent in.—With grateful acknowledgment of this and all other contributions from your readers, I remain, sir, faithfully yours,

S. D. H.

The contributions are those received up to September 25th inclusive.

L. s. d.		L. s. d.	
M. E. T.	1 0	N. E. R.	0 6
A Friend	2 6	S. S.	1 0
Blessed are ye &c.	1 0	From Bakewell	1 0
K. W.	2 6	Widow's mite.	1 0
J. P. D.	2 6	A Small Farmer.	2 6
G. S.	1 0	A Village Blacksmith.	2 6
J. S.	1 0	P. E.	1 0
C. S.	1 0	J. H. H.	3 6
S.	1 0	A. O.	2 0
H. F. C.	5 0	N. E. R.	0 8
G. H.	2 6	F. J. S.	2 0
A Reader.	2 6	K.	1 0
One towards 100.	1 0	A Clerk.	2 6
J. M.	1 0	A Reader.	3 0
Well-wisher.	10 0	E. W.	1 0 6
M.	1 0	A Reader.	2 0
Well-wisher.	5 0	Half-pay Naval Officer.	5 0
D. E. R.	2 0	A.	1 0
W. F.	10 0	M. C. G.	2 6
E. J. C.	1 10	F. A. M.	1 0
Lawyer's Clerk.	1 0	L. L.	7 6
J. L.	4 0	Widow's mite.	1 0
A Reader.	2 6	H. D.	2 6
W. L.	3 0	E. M.	1 0
'In due time'	1 0	K.	1 3
J. E. C.	1 0	Widow's mite.	2 6
Cymro.	1 0	Besides anonymous sums	6 11 8
'Many a little'	1 0	amounting to	6 11 8
M. H.	2 0		

A FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

SEE Winter's van, with blazoned banners flying,
Sweep o'er the forest, mountain, plain, and dell;
The drooping flowers and breezes sadly sighing,
To Summer bid farewell.

Blithe morns! that scattered joys, though oft repeated,

Still ever new as at creation's dawn;
By thousand glad harmonious voices greeted
From grove and dewy lawn.

Still noons! when e'en the aspen ceased to quiver,
And honey-sated lay the slumbering bee;
Amid whose silence faintly lisped the river,
Translucent to the sea.

Eves! when fond lovers paced the terraced alley—
Where, through the twilight, gleamed the lustrous
flowers;

And birds, within the leaf-enshrouded valley,
Sang from dim violet bowers.

Nights! when the starry clusters slowly thickened
To the full structure of heav'n's golden maze;

Nights! whose cool breath the stretching landscape
quicken'd,
Veiled in a moonlit haze.

Farewell! Amid your dimmed and scattered treasures,

Queen of the year, your lovers sigh adieu!
Farewell! till with your pure, health-giving pleasures,
Earth's pulse shall throb anew.

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TALE OF NORFOLK ISLAND: AND TWO
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PRICE ONE PENNY.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.